

## Minoans and Mycenaeans at *da-\**22-*to*

Crete is known from early historical times as a place composed of various peoples speaking different languages (*Od.* 19.172-177). At the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Sir Arthur Evans created the Minoan people, a native Cretan population named after the mythological king Minos, based on his interpretation of the excavations at the palace of Knossos. Since Evans, excavation throughout Greece and the decipherment of the Linear B script have complicated our views of the population and language situation in Late Bronze Age Crete. In particular, it is believed that the Mycenaeans from the mainland became a major presence in Crete sometime during the LM I period (16<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> centuries BCE). After this, administratively, the Minoan language written in Linear A was replaced by Greek in Linear B.

This paper examines a site, *da-\**22-*to*, documented in the Linear B tablets as connected with Knossos. Records involving this site show distinctive Minoan linguistic elements during the period of Mycenaean control in Crete. The preservation of non-Greek characteristics within a pre-Greek-dominated society suggests some type of retention of Minoan identity.

The place name *da-\**22-*to*, although attested in the Linear B tablets at Knossos, has yet to be identified with an actual site. Studies of Linear B place names have located the site tentatively through its associations in the tablets (Wilson 1977, Palmer 1972), placing it in north-central Crete near Knossos (Aura Jorro 1993). In terms of textual evidence, *da-\**22-*to* is recorded by at least 13 scribal hands in many find-spots in connection with many different subjects. It was a well-known site to the Mycenaean administration at Knossos. Two important tablets, KN Ce 59 and Xd 131, were found in the Room of the Chariot Tablets (RCT). Since the RCT is believed to be the oldest collection of Linear B texts, dating to the LM IIIA1 period, with the remaining Knossos tablets from the LM IIIA2 or later, the distribution of Linear B evidence shows the long-standing and continuing relationship between the palace and *da-\**22-*to* (Driessen 2008).

Since the decipherment of Linear B, a number of signs resisted phonetic transliteration due to their rarity. \*22 is one of these. Recent studies (Janda 1986, Melena 1987) have argued persuasively that \*22 has a value *mi*<sub>2</sub> or *pi*<sub>2</sub>, based on a Minoan phoneme /<sup>m</sup>bi/. This consonant /<sup>m</sup>b/ is represented in similarly rare syllabograms such as \*56 (*pa*<sub>3</sub>) and \*29 (*pu*<sub>2</sub>). The proposed Minoan origin of this phoneme is made compelling because no examples of \*22 as a syllabogram have been found at mainland Pylos, while the syllabogram appears in Linear A. There is one example of an inscribed stirrup jar (ISJ) at Eleusis with *da-\**22-*to* (EL Z 1). Dating to the LM IIIB period, ceramic analysis of similar ISJs has proved their Cretan origin. This ISJ extends our diachronic knowledge of *da-\**22-*to*, showing the continued use of a Minoan phoneme through the Late Bronze Age. Numerous non-Greek personal names associated with *da-\**22-*to* strengthen the case of a Minoan population at the site.

In conclusion, *da-\**22-*to* represents a site under Mycenaean control which preserved its Minoan identity up through the LM IIIB period. This assertion of identity could have also led to Minoan cultural and linguistic elements to be brought over to the Greek mainland. This follows other recent studies that have found Minoan interaction with the Mycenaeans in terms of ceramics (D'Agata 2005) and the Greek lexicon (Renfrew 1998).

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